



For Immediate Release

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***ENZI COSPONSORS BIPARTISAN BILL TO HELP VETERANS  
BECOME PARAMEDICS***

**Washington D.C.** – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi, R-WY, Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP Committee), today cosponsored legislation that will help returning troops in their transitions to civilian employment by speeding paramedic training for veterans with military-based medical training while addressing shortages of health care workers in rural areas.

“The medical training that many of our service-members receive is of great value both on the battlefield and when they return home,” Enzi said. “This legislation will recognize that value by promoting a smooth transition into the civilian emergency medical service workforce. This bill will help our returning soldiers along rewarding career paths, while addressing the health care worker shortage in rural areas like Wyoming.”

Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), who introduced the bill, the “Veterans-to-Paramedics Transition Act,” and Senator Enzi and Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) were original cosponsors. Representative Stephanie Herseth-Sandlin (D-SD) and Representative Jerry Moran (R-KS) sponsored the bill in the House of Representatives.

Senator Klobuchar said: “On the one hand, we have a severe shortage of emergency medical personnel in rural communities. On the other hand, we have an abundance of returning veterans who have significant training and experience. They’re an ideal talent pool to relieve the shortage.”

Enzi said that for many veterans with military-based emergency medical training who want to become certified Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel, colleges and technical schools require that they begin training at entry level. This squanders their advanced training and deters many from entering the health care workforce.

Enzi said the bill will speed EMS certification for veterans and address health care worker shortages in rural areas by:

- Providing federal grants for universities, colleges, and technical schools to establish a fast-track certification path for military veterans who have military-based medical training;
- Allowing these institutions to use these grants to develop appropriate training programs to build upon military-based skills and training and prepare veterans and servicemembers for paramedic certification by national or state authorities; and,
- Utilizing existing Department of Labor programs to facilitate the recruitment and placement of newly-certified veterans and placement in rural areas of need.

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